

Catalina León

I work making installations, paintings and embroidery on different media: cotton fabric, plaster plate, wood, canvas, tree leaves, earth, plants. I explore the possibilities of these materials, coupling my practice to their organic form.

While I work, I move forward without knowing where I'm heading. I don't have a clear plan or a finished image in mind, just a few outlines, atmospheres, questions that float around and physical gestures that mutate in an accumulation of trials and errors.

In my works there are no definite answers; instead there are layers, textures of sense and countersense. Media marked with traces of an unfinished conversation that resembles a party, or a private rite, pierced by time, context and human bonding. I find artistic practice as the possibility to prepare the mind to explore an uncertain terrain, to think without thoughts or, more precisely, to address what lays ahead not only with the mind but with body and emotions as well. I conceive it as the capability to break the logic of established discourses, of calculation and speculation.

I try to take my personal account to a more abstract place where the narrative melts, broadening up to provide a clearer view. I believe that this in turn allows other stories to eventually be projected onto those images, in the hope that representation will be the means to remember and give shape to palpating life. I spend a lot of time outside my studio, working on community projects. When I go back to painting she receives me, renews me and sends me back to work with people.

The painting is a source...

Convertidas en perlas tus lágrimas brotan del mar 2004

Your tears rise from the sea as pearls

Exhibition views

Galería Alberto Sendrós

“ (...) It 's the crack that makes possible the simultaneous readings”

First solo show occupied both of the gallery's rooms. In the first, there were family portraits on the walls, paintings on plasterboard and wood, and an installation of dried trees. In the second, the ceiling was covered with pieces of fabric with phrases, flowers, and birds embroidered on them; the floor was full of shards of plaster painted with images from art history and scenes from everyday life, shards that were piled up in the midst of fruit rinds, and cookies and crackers. In a cushion on top was a recipient with water in which to toss a coin and make a wish.









Handwritten text in red ink on a white fragment: *Handwritten text in red ink, possibly a signature or name.*

Handwritten text in black ink on a white fragment: *Handwritten text in black ink, possibly a signature or name.*

Handwritten text in blue ink on the pillow: *Handwritten text in blue ink, possibly a signature or name.*







la Pi

Subuel

endlich hält ein Regen

Kochbuch

EST





Due to a disagreement with the gallery regarding the disappearance of shards, the artist decided to close the exhibition early and to sell the small paintings on the shards by the pound at a vegetable market around the corner from her studio.

The chalkboard contains several elements:

- Top Left:** A grid with numbers and some illegible text.
- Center:** A drawing of a person wearing a colorful hat and a blue shirt.
- Right Side:** A drawing of a green and blue truck.
- Bottom of Board:** Handwritten text, including the phrase "15 \$ los 100 gr de pintura" on a pink paper sign.
- Other Text:** Various other handwritten notes and small drawings scattered across the board.



RO
LIEBKE
JABALI
PEDIDOS A
DOMICILIO
S/ CARGO
PAVITA
CIERVO





Patio o Pintura para piso y plantas 2007
Courtyard or floor painting and plants

Exhibition views
Premio arteBA – Petrobras

"...May painting grow among the grass, as it sprouts from a hand, as a flower blossoms. May drawing brake and regenerate when it grows a root or a hen's egg. To see how an embroidered pack of hounds climb on banana tree leaves. May painting be another fruit on a pomegranate tree!"

The installation was envisioned as a garden-room, surrounded by plants in which the viewer walked on a floor covered with oil paintings. From the paintings, banana trees emerged, as did large mounds of soil with chicken bones, pomegranates, live snails, and organic white paste figures that appeared to have been polished by the sea. The installation was born of the idea of inhabiting painting and envisioning it as part of human nature. It was exhibited at arteBA art fair, where it was awarded the arteBA-Petrobras prize.









In December 2018, *Patio o Pintura Para Piso y Plantas* [Patio or Painting for Floor and Plants] was donated by Fundación arteBA to the grounds of the Museo Eduardo Sívori in Buenos Aires. Resting on the soil, the work began to disintegrate while plants grew on top of it. The artist's intention in making the piece was "for the painting to sprout like a flower amidst grass as it might come out of a hand."







Cruz imaginal 2008

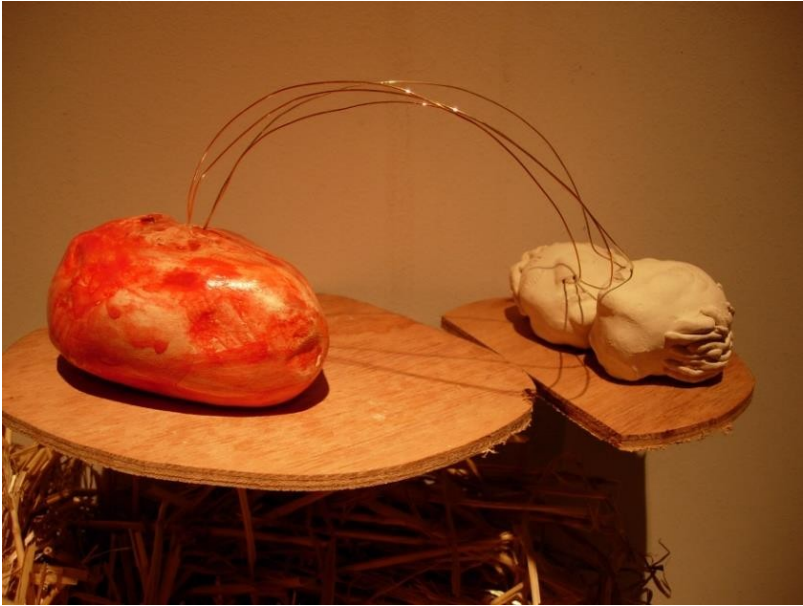
Imaginal Cross

Exhibition views

Galería Daniel Abate

The artist's second solo show was tied to vital processes of modification and to the idea of crossing thresholds. She worked on Nido de homero para humanos [Oven bird's Nest for Humans], copying the construction method of birds; the work was never completed due to the lack of sunlight in the venue. The portrait Hombre con rama en el cuello [Man with Branch in his Neck] made reference to the miraculous story of an accident. Andrógino [Androgynous] was a piece in clay with two heads, each connected to the same heart with gold threads. Carta a M [Letter to M] explained why it was impossible to make a transportable version of the nest in case it could have been purchased.







M:

I won't be able to make the nest transportable. I thought of a few ways to do it, but it was not gratifying (though making an art-work does not always have to be gratifying anyways). The point is that I could not help wondering, ;Is it not the bird that flies away, and not its nest? And yes, it is. The bird flies away, the nest awaits for its return. The issue is that making it transportable involves practically making an apparent hornero nest and what I want to make is an hornero nest, for humans but real. On the other hand, I could not help but wonder Why should the work have to travel? Sure, now everything travels. But should I have to adapt this work to a situation that is almost completely alien to it? Yes, I know: today works travel, sell, they are shown here and there. But aren't these secondary factors? Not that I find your suggestion unusual, but it would certainly change the nature of this work. Nature of the work. What thing or part of a work is its nature? The work appears after long searching or when we are no longer searching, or it just falls suddenly like fruit from a tree. The work is seen the way we see the first drop announcing the rain. It may happen sometime to confuse water falling from a balcony with water falling from the sky; it's these things about living in the city. But rain is rain and the water from a balcony does not taste the same. Yesterday, after the storm, Tomás said "In these days after the rain falls everything looks more defined, each leaf is what it is. Each thing has its importance." And it is so true. That which is seen can be modified, it may take another form, and even agents completely foreign to the work may be the ones to make it take a different turn ... The important thing is that in this being transformed the work does not lose temperature, its temperature. A temperature that all the things of this world have when they are true, when they are made with love, when they are what they're meant to be. When the work has that temperature it mysteriously starts breathing.

Yes! The work breathes, as all living things breathe. I 'm sure you 'll understand. The nest cannot be anything but solid, heavy mud. It is also important to work step by step, as the hornero would. Thus the nest is made of adobe, it is not transportable. And perhaps the only way to move it is by breaking it. The nest does not travel, but can be done over and over again anywhere in the world.

Every rainy season the hornero makes a nest. Once its chicks grow, it leaves it and builds a new nest to shelter future offspring.

Other birds inhabit the old nest: sparrows, buzzards, parrots. Sometimes the hornero leaves the nest half done; that happens when it realizes that it misdirected it. So no matter how hard it worked, it leaves it, it deserts it just like that. There is a saying that says: "lightning does not fall on a house with a hornero's nest". Apparently it's good omen if the hornero makes its nest on the roof of a house or nearby, because it's a sign that the land will provide abundant fruits. So how could I make of a nest like this a mere imitation?



Muda 2011
Mute-Molt

Exhibition views
Galería Alberto Sendrós
Buenos Aires

(...)The work became then, or more than ever, a way of inhabiting time, of seeking a silent acceptance but at the same time expectant to the inability to say or understand certain issues that amaze me. A prayer that begs for some kind of transformation.

The exhibition Muda brought together fragments of *Todo se pasa* [All Things Pass] and paintings from the "10:51" series in a large enveloping installation related to the ideas of loss and rebirth. The layout of the space began with the ceiling from which embroidered and painted pieces of cotton, hand-sewn sheets of dried leaves, and raw wool hung down. On the floor there was a large jumble of textiles, small oil paintings, and clay and paste figures like stones and snails. The shade of red painted on the gallery's walls, which were crammed with works, gradually faded further into the show.











Instalation. Painting and embroidery on cotton. 450cm x 300 cm.









Version for the exhibition *Naturaleza, recurso y refugio del hombre*.
Centro Cultura Kirchner, Buenos Aires. 2017



El sacrificio inútil 2015

The useless sacrifice

Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires

“ I approach painting as if it were an interlocutor who is always one step ahead of conscience, creating between us a breach where the mind scratches the surface but is not in control, helping to produce a comprehension leap.”

This installation that utterly modified the museum's gallery. Some works were superimposed on the walls, others hung down from the ceiling, and still others were mounted on large canvas stretchers that acted as doors and created new spaces to be walked through; viewers could touch and move through layers of painting. The counterpoint to the mostly spacious first room in earth tones was a space in its back that expanded thanks to pale colors, like light blue, tied to the notion of an ideal and deliverance.





SOBRES (DETALLE), 2013. SOBRES DE TELA BORDADOS Y LIBRO 'EL SACRIFICIO INUTIL' DE JEAN DUVIGNARD







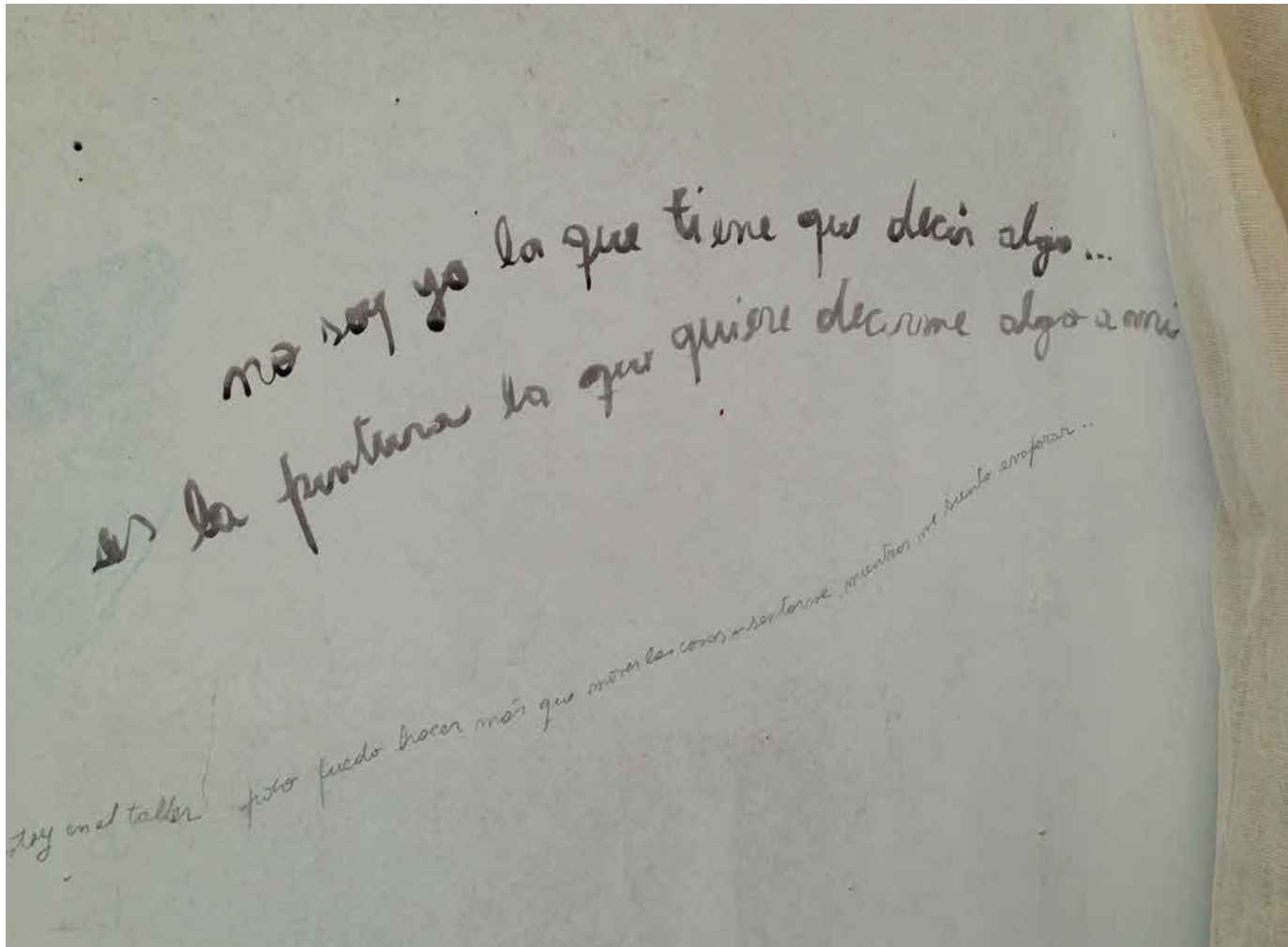












It is not me who has to say something...
It is painting that wants to say something to me

(Catalina León's studio Wall)

24:06

This series consists, on the one hand, of paintings on rigid supports like plasterboard or large pieces of wood and, on the other, of embroidered and painted pieces of fabric where figurative elements, geometric planes, and colors overlap. The nature of the works reflects two different energies. With their aplomb, the canvases are tied to stillness, longing, desire, and votive offerings. As a counterpoint to that rigid plane is the rhythm and gesture of the body in relation to dance, music, and celebration.







Siboney y La hiedra 2013/2018.
Mixed media on plaster, 120 x 200 cm.





Si bailo de noche y día 2012/2014.

Acrylic, pencil and embroidery on cotton. 200 x 120 cm.

Beso en la noche 2012/2014

Acrylic, pencil and embroidery on cotton. 260 x 150 cm.



24 de junio te encontré. 2013/2014.
Acrylic, pencil and embroidery on cotton. 210 x 90 cm.





Alba 2013.
Acrylic and embroidery on cotton. 245 x 260 cm.



(detail)



Capybara, solo apareces cuando estoy sola
2012/2014
Acrylic, pencil and embroidery on cotton.
327 x 337 cm.





La creciente 2013-2015. Acrylic, oil, pencil and embroidered piece on plaster. 200 x 120 cm.



Castillo o diamante 2013-2015. Acrylic, oil, pencil and embroidered piece on plaster. 200 x 120 cm.





Enero 2013/2014.
Acrylic and embroidery on cotton. 195 x 222 cm.

Maya 2013/2015

Acrylic, oil, embroidery on cotton, can and wooden panel. 190 x 222 cm.





Cumbia chicha 2013/2014. Latex paint, acrylic, oil and pencil on plaster. 210 x 120 cm.



Sozinho. 2013/2014. Latex paint, acrylic, oil and pencil on plaster. 210 x 120 cm.



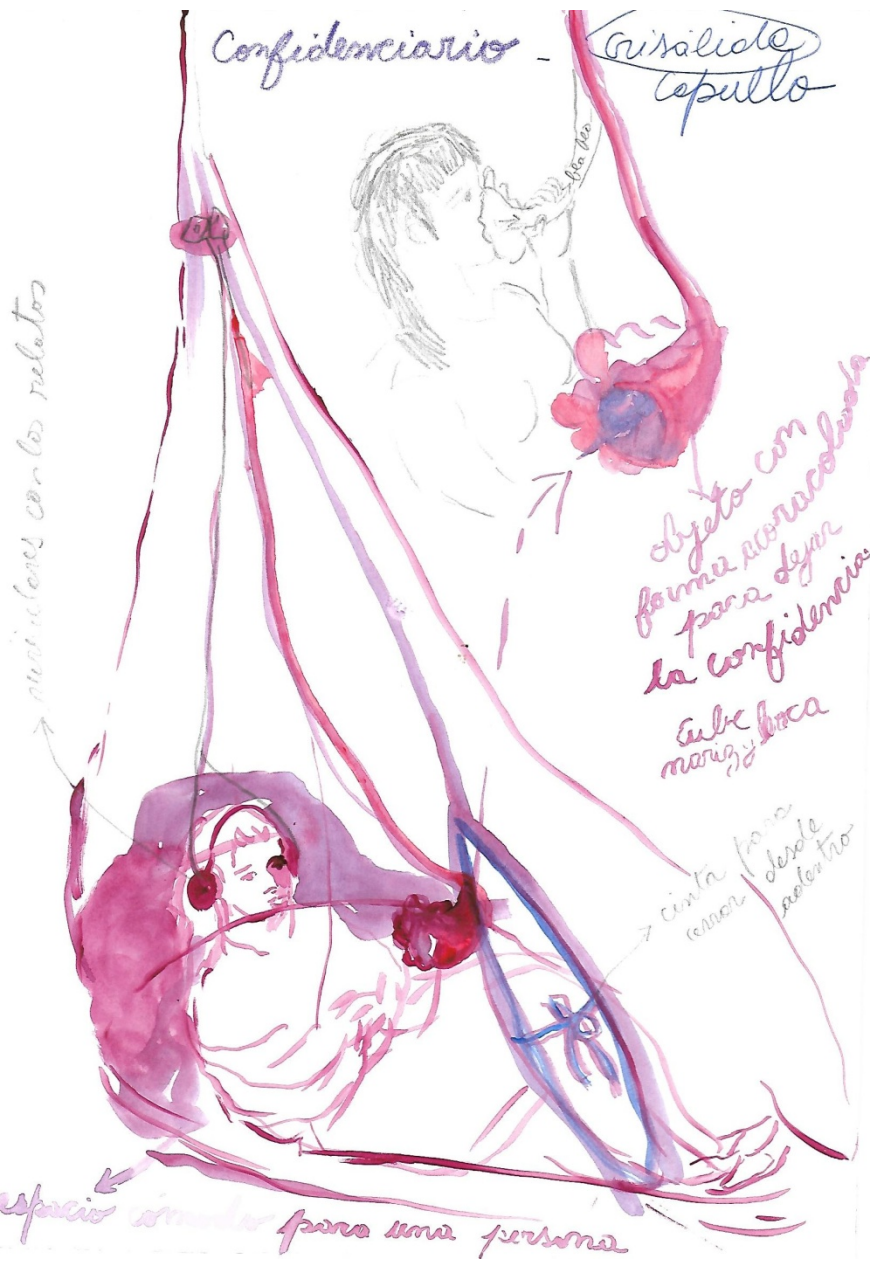


Ofrenda 2013/2015.
Acrylic, oil and embroidery on cotton. 260 x 150 cm.



Membrana, recipiente coral de la memoria 2018
Membrane, Choral Memory Recipient

Exhibition views
CC Daoiz y Velarde, Madrid, España



Membrane, Choral Memory Recipient is envisioned as a way to generate connections around topics we believe key to the construction of new sensibilities of the body, emotion, the construction of knowledge, and relational social dynamics. Developed in conjunction with La Volcana collective, Membrana: choral memory recipient is a device for reflection in a gathering place called Confidenciario where visitors can listen to others' experiences and record their own. Oral communication and subjective experiences act as ways of generating an organic whole out of disparate lived experiences. The Confidenciario also entails a corpus of theoretical texts pertinent to the issue at hand.

Issue #1 is sexual and reproductive rights, the right to choose.

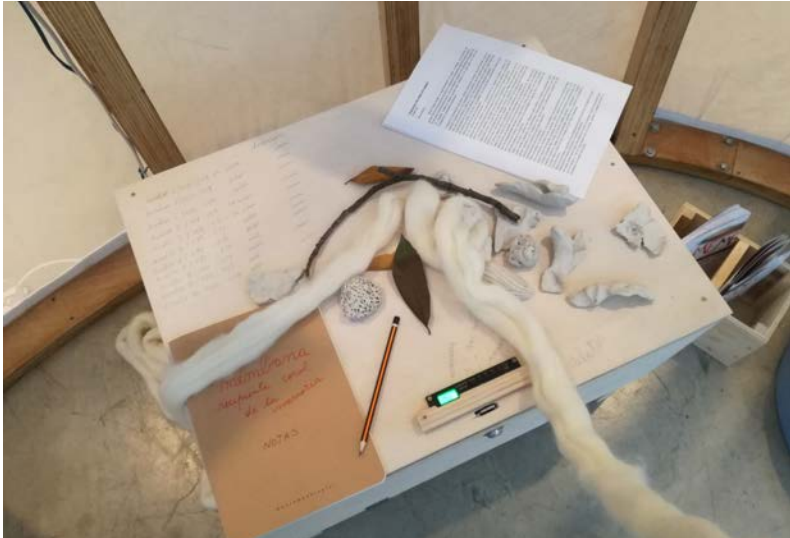


Confidenciarío

Space to say: Space that enables the atmosphere and the technical equipment necessary to record an experience.

Space to listen: A player contains 10 stories of women of different ages and countries to be heard and shared. The public can listen to all of them or select the one that interests them for their reproduction.







Body of texts

Space dedicated to thought through anthropological perspectives and geopolitical analysis of the right to free choice of abortion. The texts place us in the current political reflection on the control of the body of women that the patriarchal system continues to exercise today within society. The analysis was arranged in three axes: Decriminalization, Rebelliousness and sorority, Disobedience



- pulse PLAY para escuchar relatos de mujeres que pasaron por la experiencia de abortar.

PAUSA para dejar de escuchar.

- Si al presionar PLAY el relato está por la mitad, puede presionar el botón de RETROCEDER o el de avanzar.

- en total hay 10 relatos





Lluvia, astrología impredictiva 2017/2020
Rain, Non-Predictive Astrology

Rain, Non-Predictive Astrology is a Project devised to rethink, through art, the traditional imaginaries of astrology and its practical use in daily life. It attempts to shift the individualistic and predictive use of astrology to envision the zodiac structure as a platform for thought capable of connecting the inner and outer worlds, the individual and the collective.

Lluvia, unfolds in time in a series of site-specific actions. One of the goals is to build an installation of twelve spaces, each of them thought of as a landscape/state that evokes each one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. This place will be also used to make workshops and different experiences related with astrology. On the way, the actions that make up Lluvia adapt to the places and possibilities that arise.

The recent actions of Lluvia, consist on: astrology workshops, individual astro- sessions, the collective construction of an archive to assign new images to the signs and the realization of a survey, that through an anonymous questionnaire, attempt to learn about people's relationship to astrology.





Un zodiaco posible, exhibition view,
Usina del Arte, Buenos Aires, 2019



Lluvia began in 2017 at Bienal Sur and unfolds over time through different actions such as samples, workshops, the construction of an archive, astrological consultations, and the piece Un zodiaco posible (construction site) conceived like a zodiac that can be walked through and bring astrology closer through a sensory experience. The installation was first set up at Usina del Arte (Buenos Aires) in April 2019. The completion date of the work is uncertain, the time, the material, the places where it is displayed and the interaction with the visitors shape it.

The installation is accompanied by astrology workshops, embroidery rounds, guided tours, astrological chart readings, activities designed for specific audiences such as schools and senior citizens.

<https://vimeo.com/350138751>



Other spaces where Lluvia took place:

- Hogar Dulce Hogar, MUNTREF. Caseros, Buenos Aires. April- November, 2018
- Situaciones breves- Acciones, Poesía, Ritual. Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires. July 2018
- Workshop for teenagers, MALBA, Buenos Aires. September 2018
- El arte del mal comportamiento Guerilla Girls, La Usina del Arte, November 2018





Walks through the Zodiac

The proposal is to guide visitors on a tour of the installation, to follow the different internal logics that the zodiac proposes, for example: go from one sign to its complementary opposite or move following the triads of the four elements. The objective is for it to function as an astrology class where, in addition to receiving the conceptual information provided by astrologers, participants can incorporate knowledge through a sensory and symbolic experience. As a closing of the activity, a drawing and collage work will be carried out so that the participants take it as a class note.



Individual Inquiries

The meetings last between 30 and 60 minutes, and are based on a specific question that the visitor must have previously elaborated. At the end the consultant receives instructions to carry out some specific action, such as looking for an image or making a flower necklace.



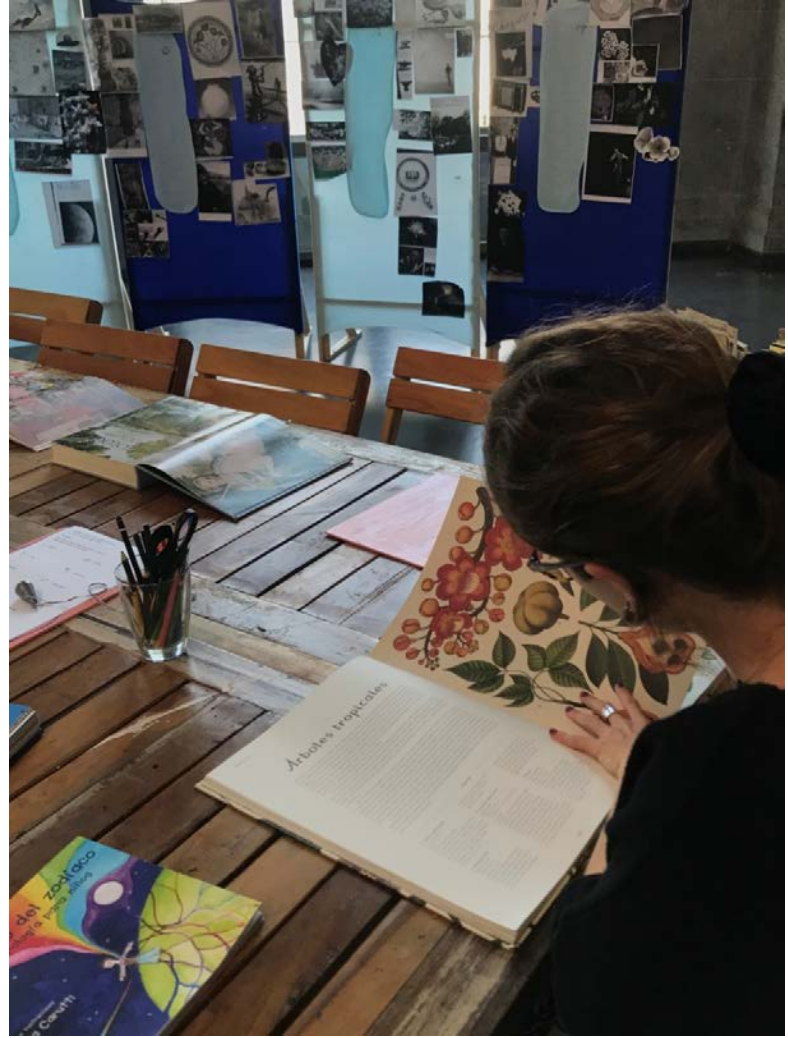
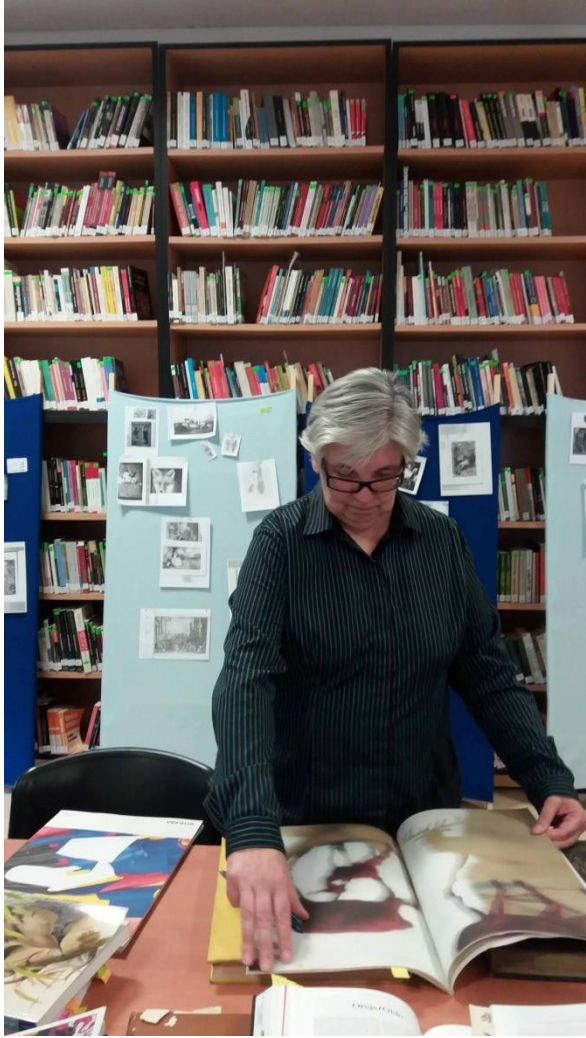




File Construction Lluvia suggests that visitors search for new images to represent the signs of the zodiac. Books, magazines and a photocopier are available; 12 panels covered with fabric, are displayed in the space - one for each sign - on these panels the images are added.

Workshops Group introductory astrology workshops are offered as part of the project. Group meetings are also held to explore the birth chart itself, based on slogans such as: What can come out of the combination of this moon and this sun? As part of these workshops, collage techniques are used and books are observed to look for images that help to convey ideas and sensations.

Probe The public is invited to answer a survey about its relationship with astrology. The survey, with multiple-choice format and phrases to complete, is available on a basis that functioned as a mailbox during presentations.



¿ los astros nos influyen?

¿ influimos nosotros en los astros?

¿ son los astros dioses o son los informantes de los dioses?

¿ dónde están los dioses?


¿ cómo son los dioses de hoy?



la astrología: una herramienta
de doble filo



- autoconocimiento
- Comprensión
- posibilidad de comprender a los demás
- claridad
- posibilidad de intuir el sentido de los eventos
- entrega, confianza
- plataforma para pensarnos como una inteligencia colectiva.

- autoconplacencia
 - quietismo, justificación
 - tendencia a creer que podemos "conocer" a alguien por su Carta
 - sobrinterpretación
 - anticipación catástrofica
 - defensa control
 - otra forma de consumo individualista
- 

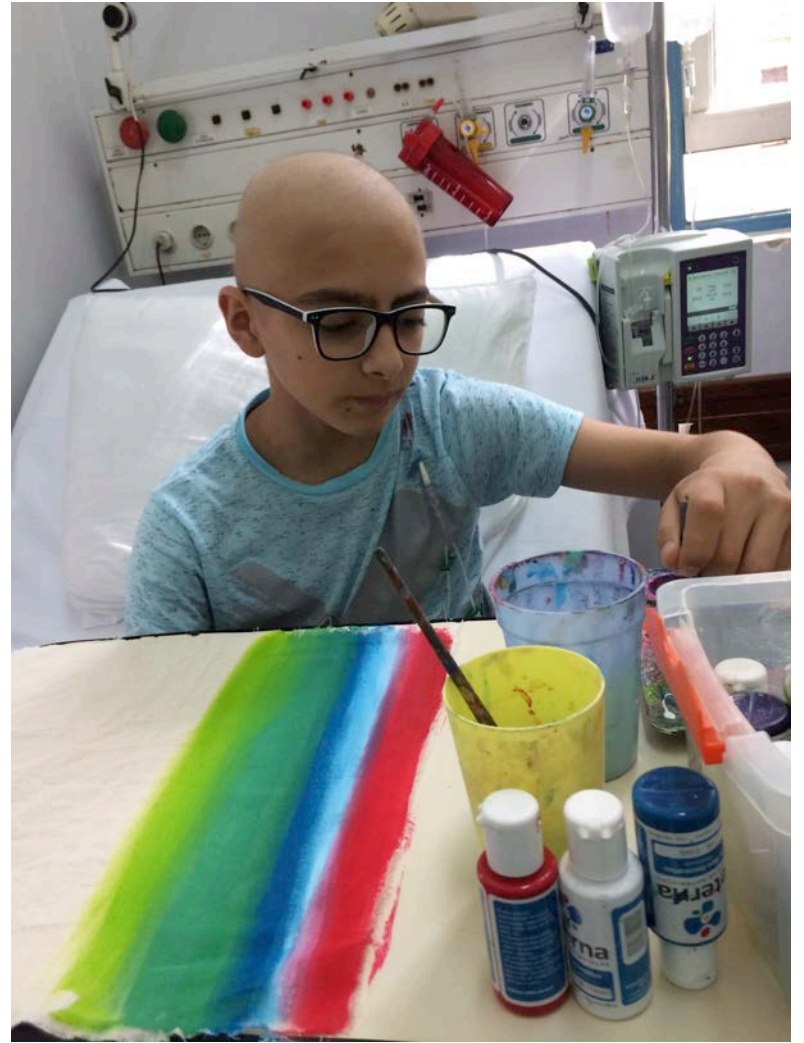




MISSION. VISION. ACTION.

We are an NGO which has been working since 2010 to blend art with health and education. Through art-making activities, we bring relief and well-being to hospitalized patients. By implementing art programs, training and communication actions, we promote art as an important tool to go along with medical treatment for a holistic and humanistic approach to health care. Our aim is for art making to serve the well-being and health of people. Art enhances the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the individual. It helps them connect with their feelings, aids in symptom management, expands their cognitive abilities and also serves as a way to communicate with their surroundings. We want to contribute to the implementation of art-making activities as a complementary tool that improves the health and the quality of life of those who suffer from chronic diseases and are receiving curative treatment, whether or not they are responding to it. Our plan is to open up a constructive dialogue between the art discipline and the medical practice so that they can enrich one another.





Activity with the medical staff from Hospital de Clínicas Buenos Aires



Workshop for health staff Buenos Aires





2nd Congress on Paediatric Palliative Care: A Global Gathering .
Rome, Italy. November 2014



Catalina León was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1981.

She is a visual artist and a cultural manager. She started her artistic training in 1998 attending various workshops and, after moving simultaneously among other studies, in 2001 decides to devote herself mainly to visual arts. Around those years she studies with artist Mariana López, whom she considers essential to her training, and between 2003 and 2005 participates of the Kuitca Scholarship Programme / Rojas UBA. Her first solo exhibition, *Convertidas en perlas tus lágrimas brotan del mar*, took place at Alberto Sendrós Art Gallery, Buenos Aires, in 2004. Followed by *Cruz Imaginal*, Daniel Abate Art Gallery, Buenos Aires, 2008, after winning in 2007 First Prize of the arteBA / Petrobrás Award with her work *Patio ó pintura para piso y plantas; Muda*, Alberto Sendrós Art Gallery, Buenos Aires, 2011 and *El sacrificio Inútil*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, 2015.

Currently she is working on *Lluvia, astrología impredecitiva*, [Rain, Non-Predictive Astrology] a participative project devised to rethink, through art, the traditional imaginaries of astrology and its practical use in daily life.

Since 2005 her works have participated in numerous group exhibitions, such as: *J'En Rêve*, Fondation Cartierpourl'ArtContemporain, Paris, 2005; *Rendez-Vous* 2008, Musée d'ArtContemporain, Lyon, 2008; *¿Por qué pintura?* Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, 2009; *Escuelismo, 90's Argentine Art*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires-Fundación Costantini, 2009; *Mientras sea posible*, Casa de America, Madrid, 2010; *PintorAs*, Museum of Contemporary Art of Rosario MACRO, Museum of Contemporary Art Saltaand Museum Caraffa, Córdoba, 2010; *Palmario*, D21 Art Gallery, Santiago de Chile, 2011; *Arte Argentino Actual en la colección del Malba*. Works 1989-2010, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires-Fundación Costantini, Buenos Aires, 2011; *Latest Trends II*, Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art, 2012; *Braque Award*, Tres de Febrero National University, Province of Buenos Aires, 2013. *Naturaleza, refugio y recurso de hombre*, CCK Buenos Aires 2017. *Hogar Dulce Hogar*, Tres de Febrero National University, Province of Buenos Aires, 2018. In 2019 she participated in the 14th Curitiba Biennial in the exhibition *The Threads of the Ritual*.

She is also cofounder and director of Vergel, an NGO that since 2010 has worked to connect art, health, and education. vergelarte.org

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